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20 August 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

South Vietnam: (Buddhist agitation continues unabated in Saigon and Hué.)

(The trend in both places is toward larger antigovernment demonstrations with student participation. A Buddhist official recently stated that agitation would continue for several months, and that monks and nuns are now receiving political guidance in the belief that the Diem government can be overthrown.)

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(A prominent Buddhist leader is reported to have stated in early August that followers were being instructed to urge a popular boycott of the national assembly elections scheduled for 31 August. A Buddhist priest who filed a candidacy for the elections is said to have been excommunicated.)

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(There is an increasing number of reports concerning Viet Cong plans to disrupt the elections. The Communist guerrillas almost certainly can harass voting in many hamlets and create confusion and obstacles to polling in remote areas.)

West Germany - Israel: (Adenauer is considering the diplomatic recognition of Israel as one of the final major acts of his public career and has requested US views on such a move.)

(The Chancellor told Ambassador McGhee on 17 August that he had discussed this idea with an unofficial Israeli representative the day before. Adenauer assured the ambassador that he did not wish, however, to introduce a new disturbing element into the Middle Eastern picture and said he hoped recognition could be handled in such a way that "the Arabs would scream for only a few days and then subside.")

(Foreign Minister Schroeder is opposed to recognition of Israel, principally because of the danger that the Arab states would retaliate by recognizing the East German regime.)

(Schroeder's fears probably are well-founded; at least Egypt, Syria, and Iraq might feel compelled to take more than token retaliatory actions.)

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Syria-Israel: The Damascus regime appears to be creating tension along the Syrian-Israeli border, possibly to divert the attention of the public from Syria's political and economic troubles.

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(There is no present evidence to support the Syrian Government's claim that the Israelis are concentrating troops along the border. Syrian forces in the frontier area have been reinforced, however.)

The Israelis have not suffered any casualties in recent incidents of shooting across the border, and have so far acted with relative restraint. Israeli retaliation would be more likely if new incidents occur, especially if they involve Israeli casualties.

Controversies over cultivation rights in the demilitarized zone between the two countries and Syrian objections to Israeli preparations for diverting water within the next several months from the Jordanian River basin are probable sources of further trouble.

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In apparently unrelated incidents, four Arab infiltrators were killed by Israeli Army patrols along Israel's Egyptian and Jordanian borders on 18 August.

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Congo (Leopoldville): (Premier Adoula's regime is concerned over possible repercussions in Leopoldville from the general strike and overthrow of the government across the Congo River in Brazzaville.)

(Criticism of the Adoula government is increasing in the face of extensive unemployment, constantly rising prices, and growing shortages. As in Brazzaville, the standard-of-living gap between corrupt government officials and the average Congolese worker is irritatingly wide.)

(Adoula called a special cabinet meeting yesterday to discuss measures to avert a strike of government employees which has been threatened for 26 August and which could get out of hand. The employees' union has been pressing Adoula to revise the civil servants' statute, to increase wages, and to impose a national austerity program.)

(The Congolese Army, too, is becoming more discontented. [redacted] the army identifies itself with the masses and probably would not take vigorous action against a crowd trying to oust the government. The best disciplined Congolese battalion--considered completely loyal to General Mobutu--is in Leopoldville, but both its commander and Mobutu left on 17 August for an extended visit to Israel.)

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Algeria: (Former Algerian nationalist leaders are reported to be planning to overthrow the Ben Bella regime.)

(Belkacem Krim, once vice premier of the pre-independence Algerian rebel government, recently told the former Tunisian liaison agent with the Algerian rebels that he and other leaders whom Ben Bella has ousted intend to start an uprising in Algeria before the end of this year. Krim sought arms and ammunition, or at least authorization for military supplies secured elsewhere to transit Tunisia. He is on a tour of Arab capitals, presumably to rally support.)

(Both Tunisian President Bourguiba and Moroccan King Hassan, who are suspicious of Ben Bella's intentions toward them, would be likely to assist Krim.)

(Krim is not likely to be able to launch a successful rebellion soon, although there may be some step-up in dissident activity in Algeria. Ben Bella's position seems assured as long as he retains the support of Colonel Boumedienne, a vice premier, defense minister, and commander in chief of Algeria's military forces.)

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NOTES

South Vietnam: Hanoi is continuing its efforts to improve the self-sufficiency of Viet Cong forces. 25X1

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[REDACTED] The mission of the group apparently was to assist in the manufacture and repair of rudimentary weapons at an unlocated arsenal in the northern part of the country. 25X1

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Bolivia-Yugoslavia: The Yugoslav ambassador in La Paz reportedly has offered ten scholarships for Bolivians to train in modern mining techniques in Yugoslavia. Belgrade apparently has also offered to send ten Yugoslav mining experts to Bolivia to introduce "modern systems of work." The US Embassy believes the proposal was made to provide a basis for an agreement which could be signed during President Tito's planned visit to La Paz in September.

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